DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 482 673 SP 041 802

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TITLE	Local Professional Development Committees: A Case Study of Educators Shaping Professional Growth.
PUB DATE	2003-00-00
NOTE	18p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association (Columbus, OH, October 15-18, 2003).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS
DESCRIPTORS	Action Research; Data Analysis; Data Collection; Elementary Secondary Education; *Professional Development; Reflective Teaching; School Districts; Teacher Competencies; *Teacher Improvement
IDENTIFIERS	*Ohio

ABSTRACT

The third research study in a series of qualitative studies examines the functions and practices of local professional development committees in Ohio. This descriptive study interviewed key informants from five Local Professional Development Committees (LPDCs) regarding their processes and practices. Resultant data indicated that several districts were succeeding in helping teachers formulate goals for professional development, engage in reflective practice, and attempt action research projects in order to improve their teaching and student achievement. These positive results were balanced by continuing needs: (1) to develop means to collect and examine data collected from the Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDPs); (2) to provide uniform determinations for awarding credit; and (3) to meet all four goals for professional development of self, students, buildings, and district over the 5 years of the IPDP. It was clear from the interviews that educators are assuming the responsibility for shaping their professional growth. (Contains 15 references.) (Author/SM)

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ED 482 673

Local Professional development Committees: A Case Study of Educators Shaping Professional Growth

A Paper Presented at:

THE MIDWESTERN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE

COLUMBUS, OHIO
10/18/03

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Abstract

The third research study, in a series of qualitative studies, examines the functions and practices of Local Professional development Committees in Ohio. This descriptive study interviewed key informants from five Local Professional Development Committees (LPDCs) regarding their processes and practices. Resultant data indicated that, several districts were succeeding in helping teachers formulate goals for professional development, engage in reflective practice and attempt various action research projects in order to improve their teaching and student achievement. These positive results were balanced by continuing needs: 1) to develop means to collect and examine data collected from the Individual Professional development Plans (IPDPs); 2) to provide uniform determinations for awarding credit; 3) to meet all four goals for professional development of self, students, buildings, and district over the five years of the IPDP. It was clear from the interviews that educators are assuming the responsibility for shaping their professional growth.

Local Professional development Committees:
A Case Study of Educators' Shaping Professional Growth

There is a ubiquitous saying that appears in many workplaces. When you do what you have always done, you get what you always got. Granted, this is not the most erudite conclusion that ever came out of the mouths of educational reformers, but it serves as a candid introduction to the problem focus of this paper: changes in teacher professional development.

Many states are attempting to create highly qualified teachers, required in the No Child Left Behind legislation, by changing what they have always done in the name of professional development for their teachers. There is a growing trend to help teachers redefine true professional development. Several states require teachers to be more specialized in their pursuit of professional development; two states, Ohio and Wisconsin, require their teachers to participate in a peer review of their professional development goals in the forms of individual professional development plans. These plans are evaluated for their relationships to school goals and student needs. The states of Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and South Carolina now require teachers to be more specialized and focused on school improvement (Boser, 2000).

While several states are attempting to change the definition of professional development, the purpose of this paper is to discuss how several Ohio school districts have modified and refined their approaches to professional development. Specifically, this study builds on earlier research which examined the implementation of Local Professional Development Committees (Herrelko & O'Connor, 2001) and the types of activities teachers pursued in their Individual Professional development Plans (O'Connor & Herrelko, 2003). This study examines how the Local Professional Development Committees (LPDCs) are functioning, what changes are made in the processes of reviewing Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDPs) to meet the needs of school districts compliance with No Child Left Behind for highly qualified teachers.

Many believe that the basis for educational reform should be to change the way teachers themselves are trained and in-serviced. For years, the practice of one size fits all, one-shot in-service workshops has dominated the professional development in which teachers engaged, despite its apparent

ineffectiveness. Hirsh, of the National Staff Development Council, estimates that only 10% of what teachers learn in traditional staff development is ever used in the classroom (Lewis, 2002). An important consideration, often neglected, is the impact of professional development on student achievement. Lewis (p. 488) maintains that, "Too often professional development is an activity that does not relate to what teachers and schools need in order to move student achievement."

In 1996, when Ohio legislators authorized the establishment of Local Professional Development Committees (LPDCs), the purpose was to grant local control to the LPDCs for renewing licenses and to develop a legal structure that provided educators with "the freedom to shape their own professional development" (Ohio Department of Education, 1998). Years after this reform in Ohio, the National Staff Development Council identified 12 standards for effective professional development (2001). Many of these standards mirror the intent of the 1996 Ohio legislation including: 1) the use of multiple sources of information to guide improvement, 2) the application of research to decision making, and 3) the process of organizing adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district.

Kimmelman & Rasmussen (2003) recognize that under the watchful eye of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, disconnected professional development will no longer be an option for teachers. Their research with professional development notes that high quality professional development provides teachers with knowledge and practice to improve their quality of teaching and thus follows the improvement of student learning. Kimmelman & Rasmussen observe that when professional development is linked to school improvement or reform activities, improvement in teacher learning occurs. They note the effectiveness of aligning each teacher's personal goals and classroom context with professional development that requires teachers to embed their improved practices into their classrooms. Thus, connections between a teacher's classroom work and professional development can help raise student achievement levels.

The creation of Learning Communities has become a popular trend (NSDC, 2001), and group professional development represents just one more aspect of a new approach to professional development. Of course, a productive professional development group entails a great deal of planning and time.

Researchers note that to move forward in teacher professional development, the professional development leadership must have time to define their functions and to operate a governing group (Kimmelman & Rassmussen, 2003). Thus, the creation of the LPDC documents authored by teachers and administrators, illustrates what excellence in professional development can look like for all school districts, not only those in Ohio. The intent of Senate Bill 230 was to rid Ohio of poor staff development programs, programs characterized by force-fed innovations that encompassed no support for the educators who would be given the responsibility to carry the innovations into the classrooms (Sparks & Hirsh, 1997). The LPDCs practices illustrate how peers value individually designed professional development plans that comply with state mandates and district goals.

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to examine how five sites, the original five sites that we have studied in our previous research, have varied in their continued efforts to maintain functioning LPDCs, which were legislated in 1996 and became operational in 1998. A qualitative design was the methodology chosen for this research, including individual case studies and a cross-case analysis. Data were collected as the result of interviews with a representative from each district. The interviews were designed to elicit perceptions of the key informants as they described the LPDC implementation. The interview protocol is listed as Appendix A.

A Description of the Five Sites

Five different sites served as subjects for this study. Pseudonyms were used to maintain anonymity for each of the districts. The five sites were located within a 130-mile radius of the researchers' proximity and were selected on the basis of size of the school district, representation of urban, suburban, or rural districts, and participation as a pilot district, and accessibility to the researchers. Pilot districts received state funding, in the amount of $50,000, to implement LPDCs prior to the mandated 1998 deadline. Several of these sites were pilot districts.

The Verde City Schools. Verde is a small town located in a rural area with a population of 11,000. The average level of experience of teachers is 16.5 years and approximately 53% have earned master's degrees or above. The average income for the residents of Verde is $28,765 whereas the average

teacher's salary is $35,000. The number of teachers in Verde is 245. As a member of a consortium with five different schools, Verde and the consortium served as one of the state's pilot districts. In the last year, Verde decided to have its own LPDC, causing the rest of the consortium schools to develop their own district LPDCs. They felt that handling all of the IPDPs for teachers in the entire consortium were more than one committee could manage.

The Auckland City Schools. Auckland City Schools, population of 19,000 with a student enrollment of 4,060, is a small, industrialized city located 35 miles north of a metropolitan area. The average years of experience for the teachers of Auckland are 15.5 years and 67% have earned master's degrees of higher. While the average income of the residents is $33,600, the average teacher's salary is $39,975; there are approximately 193 teachers.

The Dearborn City Schools. The city of Dearborn has a population of 31,300 with 5,993 students. Dearborn, a suburb in a metropolitan area, is adjacent to a major military base. The average teacher in Dearborn City Schools (DCS) has taught 16 years and 52% of the DCS teachers have earned master's degrees or higher. While the average income for DCS residents is $31,399, the average teacher salary is $39,200. The total number of teachers is approximately 241. Dearborn applied for but was denied pilot status and state funds to create their LPDC.

The Target Schools. The Target City School district serves a community of 50,000 citizens. Target, like Dearborn, is a suburb in the same metropolitan area with approximately 7,380 students and 460 teachers in the system. The Average income for Target residents is $86,362 while the average teacher salary is $48,541. Presently, 54% of the teachers have five years of teaching experience or less. Target Schools' LPDC was one of the pilot school districts in the state.

The Diversity School District. The Diversity Public School District (DPS) serves a school community with a population of 26,000. The average teacher in DPS has taught 15.3 years. The Diversity School district did not take part in the pilot project to create their LPDC a year earlier than mandated. The committee published three in-house documents for teachers, *Certificate Renewal and Licensure Information Packet, Certificate Renewal and Licensure Procedural Packet,* and an *Update* to the procedural packet with "revisions and/or clarifications" to assist teachers when writing their IPDPs.

Three revisions of the Procedural Packet have occurred since the original documents were written. The changes to the document are to facilitate and ensure the incorporation of district initiatives into the IPDP applications and to help teachers use the on-line applications.

Procedure for Data Collection

A qualitative methodology was best suited for this study. The use of interviews and written documents (Patton, 1990) served as reliable sources of data collection. For the data collection, we developed an interview protocol, which consisted of nine main questions (see Appendix A). The questions were designed to illuminate the choices each site made as to how they operated their LPDC. We interviewed a key informant from each site, several of whom had been part of the past process of creating the LPDCs and individuals who were involved in the process of approving and rejecting IPDPs. The documentation and information from the interviews supplied the data for this study.

Five individual case studies and a cross-case analysis of the five districts were completed as a result of the interviews. Participants were given the opportunity to review their case study to ensure accuracy of transcription and to assist in member checking (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Sensitizing concepts have been regarded by researchers as being useful for providing a focus to guide qualitative methods (Blumer, 1979; Denzin, 1989; Patton, 1990). In this study, the researchers' knowledge of relevant research and experiences with professional development served as sensitizing concepts and influenced our data analysis. Additionally, one of researchers actually served on a committee that developed LPDC documents.

Results

As a result of the interviews with the five key informants, data were collected and analyzed; the resultant patterns and themes emerged.

Changes in Implementation, Committees, IPDP Documentation and Revisions

Each of the districts' representatives explained improvements in communicating expectations to their teachers. The Auckland representatives explained how they had developed "sizable packets" and that their document now is divided into four sections to delineate the four professional development outcomes: self, student, building, and district goals. Target reported improvements that resulted from

aligning their document with Charlotte Danielson's (2002) assessment model. Diversity and Verde informants both reported that they have placed their documents online. Diversity also expressed a continuous desire to improve their document to ensure a stronger alignment between teacher goals and district initiatives.

In terms of committee alignment, no real changes were reported among the districts of Auckland, Target, and Diversity. Dearborn reported adding another elementary school representative to their committee and that the administrative member was not always available but did attend committee meetings whenever an administrator's IPDP was reviewed. Verde's committee was now smaller as a result of leaving the consortium. Diversity founding members have rotated off the committee. Issues have arisen with regard to the political influence new members attempt to exert on the existing members. The Diversity LPDC members have supported one another over the years that created the defining document, revised the IPDP forms, and reviewed documents to award professional development units (PDUs) of credit. These experiences bonded them into a supportive group that new members soon learned how to work within the group without political influence.

As a result of changes and improvements over the last year or so, it is now perceived that Auckland teachers suffer from less anxiety when working on their IPDP. At Dearborn, the informant observed that many teachers tried to ignore the committee's requests and pleas to complete IPDPs. The teachers realized the necessity of conforming when the stated consequences were implemented - teachers lost certification and had to be placed on substitute teacher pay. Since these consequences, the Dearborn LPDC committee experiences fewer problems. Target and Diversity representatives indicated that progress was made and that fewer informational meetings were being held. Only Verde, which broke away from the consortium, mentioned problems with "trying to get our educators to understand the process . . . Some teachers still think they need to summarize what they have done, rather than project what they are going to do." However, the representative did state that the teachers are beginning to set long-term goals that correlate to building and district goals.

Lastly, we found that the districts varied as to how and when they allowed teachers to revise their IPDPs. The Verde representative reported that not many teachers revised their documents, and that the

committee met annually to reflect on IPDP progress. The Dearborn LPDC completed a "mid-cycle review;" at this juncture, teachers were able to revise any part of their IPDP. Auckland teachers were allowed to file an addendum at anytime; however, the addendum was only to be submitted in instances where the teacher feels that the plan "no longer reflects current job status, professional interest, or direction of the building or district." Target and Diversity appeared to be much more stringent regarding changes to IPDPs. That is, both districts did not allow the teacher to change any of their IPDP goals: only the activities were negotiable for minor changes.

Approval of Professional development Activities

The first study of LPDCs described how six districts varied in their awarding and naming of credit for professional development units (Herrelko & O'Connor, 1999). In all, 27 different options were found. This present study sought to determine if LPDCs were granting approval for professional development activities that were not related to teachers' areas of certification, as this appeared to be the case in the second study (O'Connor & Herrelko, 2003). Dearborn's representative indicated that they approved any professional development activity, as long as the activity relates to education. Similarly, Diversity and Target approved all activities that were related to the pursuance of a master's degree in education. Target was more stringent on approving activities for those who were past their master's degrees; in these cases, activities were required to be "job embedded" in order to be approved. Auckland provided a differing perspective. The informant stated that they would approve activities that were outside of one's area of certification as long as the individual demonstrated how the activity met their "individual interests" or individual professional development goals.

Traditional Means of Professional Development Versus New Approaches

Each representative was asked to comment on whether teachers were still pursuing traditional means of professional development, course work and workshops, as opposed to less traditional options, such as educational travel, mentoring, and study groups (see O'Connor & Herrelko, 2003). While four of the districts indicated that traditional professional development still dominated, Target observed that the choices for professional development goals were dependent on the years of experience of the teacher. Those teachers with five years experience or less (which describes 54% of Target's teacher population)

still pursued traditional options to fulfill requirements for the Ohio mandated achievement of a master's degree. Teachers with more experience who were seeking a second approval of their IPDPs were seen as "risk taking" as the key informant reported a greater desire to implement the district's theme of "job embedded, student driven" professional development. At Auckland, Dearborn, and Diversity the informants stated less traditional and more diverse activities were being selected when compared with past IPDP activities.

Teachers as Active Learners

Informants from each district commented on whether this new approach to professional development was, in their viewpoint, resulting in teachers who were more active learners and who sought multiple means of professional development. Four of the representatives felt positively about their teachers selections; more professional development was available and it seldom fit the one-size-fits-all, one-shot model. Auckland discontinued the semiannual workshops for all educators two years ago. At Diversity, the LPDC members believed that teachers were "learning, applying, and reflecting on their work" on a more routine basis. The informant from Target noted, "reflection is in a second wave" for those teachers who sot less traditional, "risk taking" methods of professional development. At Dearborn, where many faced a "rude awakening," more value was placed on professional development than in past and reflection, although it is not observed in any written or formal way, is thought to be more prevalent.

At Verde, a higher degree of negativity was reported. The representative felt that teachers who were permanently certified, and therefore not required to complete IPDPs, contributed to the negativity regarding the process. Like some of the teachers at Dearborn, some Verde teachers "only worry about the IPDP when it is the year their credentials are up for renewal or transition." At Verde, the selection of appropriate professional development goals continued to be problematic.

How collecting, reviewing, evaluating data changed the district's approach to professional development.

When the districts first began collecting Individual Professional Development Plans, all districts had paper forms for educators to complete. The burden of record keeping became evident within the first year of implementation; how to create IPDP documents that would provide reviewers with action plans that captured what each educator planned to do over five years was difficult for all districts. Where to

store the collection of data was another key element districts still grappled with after 4 years of implementation. Of the five districts interviewed for this report, Diversity and Auckland districts moved to a computer application system. All others continued to use paper formats. In four districts, the IPDPs were collected and information recorded onto spreadsheets in order to streamline the review processes. The spreadsheets were used for efficiency measures in the review process and to know when the work of an IPDP was finished. To date, none of the districts stated that the spreadsheets were used for data analysis purposes.

The Target LPDC reviewed their spreadsheets for trends and needs that were reported to the district staff development committee. This report of needs and trends information would focus the district-wide professional development the following year. The committee paid particular attention to the IPDPs of teachers who were in their second round of license renewal as this committee found that teachers with the state mandated master's degree were open to risk taking and centered on improving their practice. The Diversity LPDC cited their use of the spreadsheets to ensure that educators were incorporating district initiatives into their professional development goals. Detailed examinations or analyses of the collected data were not mentioned in any of the interviews.

Addressing all four areas: district, building, students and self in the IPDP applications.

In the first study of the LPDC creation (Herrelko & O'Connor, 2001), it was noted that the state requirement to address four areas of concern – district, building, students and self – in the IPDP initiatives and needs for professional growth, were not addressed with the same emphasis between districts. Some LPDCs demanded that each activity address all four areas, while other districts wanted educators to address each one of the four areas individually over the length of the licensure. The second study of LPDCs examined the activities selected in the IPDPs. Given the passage of time and having seen the outcomes of IPDPs written to address both of these approaches, this study asked if any changes to the IPDP forms were made to match the state legislation.

The five districts fluctuated from strict interpretation of this requirement to dismissal of the demand as not feasible within the time allotted to carry out the IPDP and report on the consequences. Diversity created specific line entries on the IPDP in which addressed each of the four areas. Dearborn did not

believe that all four areas could be addressed in a timely manner and approved IPDPs with less than four planned areas. Target and Diversity sent IPDPs back for rewriting when all four goals were not met, while Auckland and Verde checked for compliance, but did not provide the consequences for not meeting the four areas. The Diversity and Auckland LPDCs encouraged their educators to write goals that would incorporate more than one area, such as overlapping building and district initiatives. This made the review approval process easier for their committees. The compliance with this part of the legislation has not been complete nor consistent within the interviewed districts.

Funding issues.

When the LPDCs were created, compensation for this additional workload was interpreted differently by each school district. Questions were raised regarding the issue that administrators were required to serve on LPDCs, but it was to be considered part of their job description. Teachers did receive additional compensation since the committee work was done, initially, after school hours (Herrelko & O'Connor, 2001). This study examined how districts were addressing this aspect of the LPDCs.

Local control of funding still varied with each district included in this study. Today, all districts but Target paid every member of the LPDC a stipend. In several districts, the stipends were paid with Title II funds that Ohio assigns to districts for teacher professional development. However, the amount of the stipends varied from district to district starting with an annual low of $800 to the high of $3,000 for participation on the LPDC. The Target LPDC reported that only the committee members with additional work responsibilities received stipends and these were not equal amounts. All districts selected to provide school day time for the review process to take place. Depending on the number of submissions for review, this could be a whole school day or only a portion with the expectation of remaining for several hours after the contracted school day to complete the IPDP review process in a timely manner. There was no correlation between the amount of the stipends and the wealth of the school district, nor with the number of IPDPs reviewed.

The effects of reflection.

In the LPDC document creation (Herrelko & O'Connor, 2001), the majority of the five districts noted the importance of teacher reflection in their reporting of evidence at the completion of the goals of the

IPDPs. The reports of the effects of teacher reflection varied from being a challenge that was met only when professional development units were withheld until reflections were written, to having powerful positive effects on teachers and their practice. All districts found reflections in their final IPDP reports. Dearborn, Diversity, Verde and Target required reflection at the end of the IPDP process and required it to be part of the final report on what was accomplished by that IPDP and how it affected the teacher's practice. Target found that reflection motivated their teachers to create deeper studies of their practice for their second IPDP application. The Target committee found the second IPDP by teachers became more action research oriented. The Target teachers' second IPDP noted aspects of their teaching that could improve and carried those insights into a more focused approach to improve their practice. Reflection was seen as having a positive impact as described in the work of Darling-Hammond & Marshall (1995).

Use of contractual teaching duties as professional development

The original intent of the IPDPs was to increase professional development for all educators in a constructive manner that would increase the quality of teaching through focused professional development centering on individual needs and interests (Herrelko & O'Connor, 2001). What was found in the 2002 study revealed that many teachers did not grasp the concept of professional development being separate from contractual classroom duties. Target, Verde and Diversity did not permit teachers to count any classroom duties toward the work directed to the completion of an IPDP, nor for the awarding of PDUs. Diversity was very open about the fact that some applications slipped through the cracks the first years of implementation, but the process today has better inter-rater reliability with one of its goals to send back to the teacher any IPDP with contractual teaching duties as professional development. Target returns the proposals and works with the teacher to create case studies that would be applicable to more situations than the immediate one facing the teacher. Dearborn allows in-service conducted by the district and peer observations as parts of the IPDP although these activities are conducted during the school day. Auckland allows the teacher to use classroom time for research and reflection and still receive PDUs toward license renewal. While the second study of this series notes the use of and approval of contractual time in IPDPs (O'Connor & Herrelko, 2003), this study finds the districts demanding more from their educators as they help the educators become highly qualified.

Conclusions and Discussion

The resultant data provided interesting conclusions. Causes for optimism were found in the teachers' ability to compose an IPDP and their selection of non-traditional goals. Only one district felt that problems still existed with writing IPDPs as projected goals. Four districts expressed optimism that they viewed their educators as active learners rather than submissive learners to proscribed workshops and course work. This fulfilled the Ohio Department of Education definition of quality professional development as "Educators need opportunities to explore, question, and debate in order to integrate new ideas into their repertoires and their classroom practice" (p.5).

This study found areas of concern that LPDCs need to address. The inability of the LPDCs to ensure that educators were basing their IPDPs on the state requirement to match the IPDP goals with the "relevance to the needs of the district, school, students, and educator" (ODE, 1998, p.4). Each LPDC varied in how it communicated these goals to their educators. Some mandated the requirement, while other LPDCs allowed teachers to choose activities outside of their area of licensure just because it met the teacher's individual needs. The assurance of compliance may need a second mandate from the Ohio Department of Education to ensure that selected professional development aligned with student achievement and building goals.

District LPDCs varied in how they addressed the importance of reflection, the funding of the LPDC committee members, and the definition of when professional development hours could be earned. Several of the districts in this study approved credit for teachers to do what their contract states they are paid to do. Is it truly professional development to accomplish IPDP goals during contractual teaching time? The Ohio Department of Education should define this expectation clearly, so all districts implement this demand evenly.

Studying the implementation of a new professional development process that values teachers, students, the school building and the district's initiatives was professionally rewarding to see educators recognized as professionals. Ohio Senate Bill 230 required educators to take control of their individual professional growth in which educators defined the level of expertise each teacher strove to achieve. Rather than being dropped into professional development that the district deemed meritorious, or was

purposeful for the district, teachers know their individual needs and can now earn credit toward licensure renewal by working activities that will enhance their personal professional growth.

How districts implemented their LPDCs addressed the individuality of each school district. This study compared how school districts enabled their LPDCs to measure professional growth effectively. The study looked at aspects of awarded professional development units, committee structures and funding. It was clear that educators embraced the research that recognized the shortcomings of one-shot professional experiences that were not unified with purpose nor with goals for an end product that enhanced the profession of the educator.

With the success of these LPDCs, come issues that need further examination. The No Child Left Behind legislation requires databased, data driven decisions and the use of programs that are research-based. The LPDCs have the ideal opportunity to combine these demands by mining the data in their IPDPs and analyzing those conclusions to tailor future initiatives, provide programs for educators who need assistance in becoming highly qualified, recognize educational leaders, find educators who are successful mentors, or successful with educational aspects that the district needs to address. Perhaps the process of LPDCs reviews of IPDPs is too new to districts for them to value a detailed data analysis of their collected information from their IPDPs.

Impediments to the LPDC process remain in two areas: 1) leadership issues; 2) state requirements for advanced degrees. Growing leaders who will continue the spirit of the law that created LPDCs and to continue helping teachers grow in their selection of professional development activities takes time and experience. The stat requirement that new teachers must obtain a master's degree takes the focus off their professional development and on to coursework rather than action research that would enhance their classrooms. Advances in pay levels reward traditional professional development routes. This should be examined and thought given to moving teachers over on the pay schedule by awarded PDUs as well as course credit. Slow, steady gains in the workings of the LPDCs are some cause for optimism that educators are truly embracing professional status provided by the Local Professional Development Committees.

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Appendix A - Interview Protocol

Local Professional Development Committees
Study III - Interview Protocol

1) For your district, we looked at your districts original Local Professional development Committee (LPDC) document in 1999. In 2000, we examined how your educators chose to structure their professional development as stated in their Individual Professional development Plans (IPDP).
    a. Please tell us how your LPDC document has changed over the last four years? i.e. awarding of PDUs, IPDP forms, committee governance?
    b. Have you added or removed awarding of credits for any reasons?
    c. In our second study, we found that the typical means of professional development i.e. coursework, conferences and workshops dominated the less traditional options, i.e. educational travel, mentoring, study groups, on IPDPs by a ratio of 10 to 1. Do you think this dominance of the traditional approach still prevails?

2) The original intent of the Senate bill 230 was to help create educators who are life long learners eliminating the one shot mentality to professional development. Now that you have read several years of IPDP applications, how do you feel about this new approach to professional development? Is this system achieving what it set out to do, that is to have teachers become more active learners who would seek multiple means of professional development?

3) In the second study, we found that each district varied in their approach to changes made to IPDPs.
    a. How are educators able to change their IPDPs?
    b. Does your LPDC permit any changes during the 5 year period covered by the teacher's license?
    c. Does your LPDC permit any changes during the academic year?
    d. Does your LPDC approve IPDPs that enable the teacher to pursue professional development outside of their area of certification /licensure?

4) In our original study, each district mentioned the burden of record keeping.
    a. How are you collecting the data from the IPDPs?
    b. Who analyzes the data collected from the IPDPs?
    c. What have you done with the results of this data collection?
    d. Has this data changed your district's plans for faculty professional development i.e. more or less of the same amount of in-service offerings?

5) How does your district's LPDC assure that all four areas required by Senate Bill 230 (students, self, building and district goals) are met in your educators' IPDPs?

6) In our first study, we found a variance in how districts are funding their LPDC to support this reform.
    a. What has happened in your district to your LPDC regarding funding?
    b. Are the LPDC members compensated in any way? Is this the same or different from the original committee?

7) In our previous review of the documents, we saw that reflection on the professional development activity was required.
    a. How do you think this impacted the goal to develop educators that are more reflective practioners?
    b. Please provide examples of how your LPDC measures reflective educators.
    c. Do you see any evidence that follow-up to IPDP goals has occurred?

8) In our second study as we reviewed IPDPs, we found that several teachers counted as their hours for professional development hours that they were in class teaching. For example, if an educator participated in a study group that investigated a new teaching strategy, the educator was able to count 20 hours of reading the professional literature and 10 hours of classroom time in which the teacher taught the strategy to students. The educators received credit for 30 hours, even though 10 of them were during normal working hours.
    a. What do you think about this?
    b. To your knowledge was this permitted in your district?

9) Is there anything else you would like to add?

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Dear Jeanette,

Here is one more paper which was presented at the Mid-Western Educational Research Association conference in October. Please forward it to the appropriate ERIC Clearinghouse. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jean W. Pierce

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